

Broad Band Advisory Committee
Tuesday, April 28, 2015 at 6:00PM – 7:00PM
Montague Center Fire Department
28 Old Sunderland Rd, Montague, MA 01351

April 28, 2015 Broad Band Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes Present: Kevin Hart, Rob Steinberg, Peter Vichi, Lisa Enzer

1. Approved minutes of 4/20 metg. KH motion PV 2nd AIF

2. Town Bond Counsel Kara Adams of Locke Lord, LLC wrote town must have MLP to borrow and administer funds for building broad band with private entity. New info on number of homes (33% increase from last informal count) changes costs. A MLD cannot function as MLP, but does not preclude town from voting to establish an MLP. A postponement of bringing article 24 to a vote at town meeting is an opportunity to better quantify the results of more research and potential design solutions.
RS. Motion for ‘no-vote’ at May 2. 2015 town meeting-LE 2nd More discussion of steps to create MLP at special town meeting
AIF of ‘no vote’

3. KH report on MBI meeting at FRCOG Wed. April 22 in Greenfield. KH & LE attended.
Director of MBI, Eric Nakajimi: Commentary on accuracy of maps and need to update Montague’s numbers and locations of underserved homes. Noted might be need for either validation or investigation of coverage needs. Guidelines for grants to help fund coverage up to 98% would be ready by June, with late August deadline. Expectation Comcast will be big player in this, though it is a competitive process. May meeting TBA w/MBI for members of BB committees to review of draft of solicitation process to MBI, with awards by end of summer.
Elizabeth Copeland, legal counsel for MBI introduced.
Majority of towns in attendance appear to want Comcast to finish coverage- however the number of unserved in those towns is less than Montague, yet larger percentage of over all town households. 4% unserved in Montague is possibly 100+ homes, and businesses. There are limits to linking all houses via Comcast and could leave entire neighborhoods un-served, meaning no change in current status.
Montague presents unique set of challenges and possible solution(s) would come through a set amount of MBI money; the town would need to cover the shortfall.

- In order for BB committee to present optimal solution, a plan needs economic and geographic merit. KH will draft a letter of intent to MBI to be reviewed at next meeting of BB committee.
Waiting until special town meeting (fall 2015) to request vote on MLP provides time to get clarity from MBI as well.

Audience comment: need education and set details prior to next town meeting to convince people to focus on benefits of service- use both grassroots outreach and to key members of town meeting.

4. PV wrote draft of survey – briefly reviewed and discussed. Next BB meeting need to establish create concrete information required and simplify language for accuracy of responses. KH contacting towns of Princeton and Leverett to see who provided surveys for their projects.

PV- will research & call companies to ask general est. of cost for survey (by miles/per pole).

5. Unanticipated business- the need to bring a CAC committee member onto BB committee. Informal conversation ensued- can bring to next meeting as agenda item.

Next meeting-Tuesday, May 26, 2015 6PM Town Hall TF
Meeting adjourned 6:58PM